

PEDESTRIANS

Walking is an essential part of our daily activities, whether it be trips to work, shop, or play. Often pedestrian facilities are overlooked or merely added onto street improvement projects. However, to preserve and enhance the quality of life for Lincoln, consistent maintenance **and rehabilitation** of the existing pedestrian system and additional facilities are needed. Planning and developing pedestrian facilities should consider many factors:

- Location of existing and planned activity centers and districts, such as shopping malls, older neighborhood centers, libraries, community centers and schools.
- Programs to retrofit established sections of town with pedestrian amenities.
- Design standards for pedestrian facilities in new residential and mixed-use developments.
- **Location of existing and planned multi-use trails.**
- Requirements from the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA).
- Needs of a growing senior population.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Workshop Vision Statement

*“Elevate status of
pedestrians and bicyclists
in the community to be an integral
part of the Transportation Plan.”*

The Comprehensive Plan’s Pedestrian Plan serves to make pedestrian facilities an integral part of the planning and development from the earliest stages of the planning process.

PEDESTRIAN LEVEL OF SERVICE FACTORS

Five factors make up the quality of the pedestrian environment and define pedestrian level of service:

- Continuity - The sidewalk system should be complete and without gaps. The pedestrian network in shopping centers should be integrated with adjacent activities.
- Security - Pedestrians should be visible to motorists and other pedestrians. Pedestrians should be separated from motorists and bicyclists. Adequate lighting should be provided.
- Visual Interest - Pedestrians enjoy a visually appealing environment. Street lighting, fountains, and benches should match the local architecture. Pedestrian amenities should include landscaped parkways with street trees between the street and sidewalk.
- Directness - Pedestrians should be able to walk in a direct path to destinations like transit stops, schools, parks, and commercial and mixed-use activity centers. Directness is the ratio of actual distance along a sidewalk or pathway divided by the minimum distance the trip would take on a grid system.
- Street Crossing - Street crossings should feel safe and comfortable. Factors to consider are number of lanes to cross, traffic volumes, turning movements, speed of traffic, signal indication, curb radius, crosswalks, lighting, raised medians, visibility, curb ramps, pedestrian buttons and convenience.

PEDESTRIAN ACTIVITY CENTERS PLAN

Pedestrians are found throughout the community. Their needs can vary by where they are located:

- Pedestrian Districts - These areas are typically located in settings where people go to walk around, shop, eat, or conduct business.

These districts attract large numbers of pedestrians on a regular basis. They include the Downtown (along with the main campus of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln), University Place, College View, and Havelock. Pedestrian level of service standards in these areas should be high. These areas should have direct, continuous sidewalks with safe street crossings. Visual interest and amenities should serve to attract people to these districts. Future large scale, mixed- use activity districts should be considered members of this category of pedestrian activity centers.

- Activity Corridors and Centers - These areas tend to be located along arterials, particularly where two major arterials might intersect. These locations often have strip commercial or “L” shaped neighborhood shopping centers. Directness and safety for pedestrians going to, from, and within these corridors and centers should be stressed.
- Schools - While it might not be critical for the route to school to be picturesque and visually captivating, a safe and secure environment must be provided for students going to and coming from schools. Sidewalks should be direct and continuous with safe street crossings.
- Transit Corridors - Transit trips begin and end as pedestrian trips. Directness and safety are critical elements.
- Other Areas - All areas of the community should have safe, secure, and reasonably direct pedestrian connections. Activities of daily living should be available within walking distance. Neighborhoods should include homes, stores, workplaces, schools, and places to recreate. Interconnecting streets, trails, and sidewalks should be designed to encourage walking and bicycling, reduce the number and length of automobile trips, and conserve energy.

Strategies: Pedestrian Activity Centers Plan

- Target pedestrian improvements in areas shown on the Pedestrian Activity Centers Plan. Refine map as necessary. Use pedestrian standards.
- Establish dedicated funding discussed later in this section.
- Give priority consideration to funding pedestrian facilities within the capital improvements programming process.
- Maintain and improve the existing school crossing protection program **and develop and implement the Safe Routes to School program.**

In order to create greater pedestrian opportunities, particularly in the construction of new “multi-modal” roads and the reconstruction of existing roads, sidewalks and safe street crossings should give consideration to pedestrian push buttons, crosswalk enhancements, median refuge islands, bulb-outs, and other design features. In the older built environment, design considerations should be given to similar options with special flexibility sought to minimize impacts to adjacent uses.

MULTI-USE TRAIL SYSTEM

The existing and planned multi-use trail system that serves the community is a critical resource for pedestrian users as well as other users such as bicyclists. As a strength of the community and a foundation to further meet the needs of pedestrians and other users, the maintenance, rehabilitation, and expansion of the multi-use trail system should be a priority.

Strategies: Multi-Use Trail System

- **Extend the multi-use trail system into new neighborhoods as the city grows. Connections should be made to schools, parks, and other activity areas.**
- **Explore options to establish a dedicated funding plan to complete the multi-use trail facilities plan, and for the continued maintenance and rehabilitation of these facilities.**
- **Identify critical segments offering greater system continuity and connections for major activity centers and schools. Undertake projects to complete identified gaps in the system.**
- **Promote the usefulness of multi-use trails for various users including pedestrians.**

PEDESTRIAN STANDARDS

Pedestrian standards should be prepared for public and private developments. These standards should consider existing and future pedestrian activity centers. The standards should be realistic and easy to understand. Checklists may be used to implement the standards.

Pedestrian standards should identify key destinations, and plan for pedestrian facilities to and from these locations. Key destinations include schools, parks, trails, and activity centers.

Strategies: Pedestrian Standards

- Develop minimum pedestrian standards for all new public works projects, including new roadways and reconstruction of existing roadways. These standards should include street crossing treatment, sidewalk design, and landscaping.
- **Continue to develop and implement** ~~Develop minimum~~ pedestrian standards for private developments to provide pedestrian facilities connecting key destinations such as schools, parks, trails, and activity centers.
- Select a short-term public works demonstration project embracing best practices pedestrian design standards.
- Develop a city-wide database of pedestrian facilities and crosswalks. Develop a dedicated funding mechanism and prioritization process for implementing improvements.
- The planning process is to develop standards that define pedestrian level of service concepts.
- **Include pedestrian and bicycle facilities in the design and construction of bridge and roadway projects.**

PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES COORDINATION

There is currently not a single clearing house for pedestrian planning, design, and engineering in the City of Lincoln. Instead, a number of departments address pedestrian mobility and sidewalks with varying perspectives as part of other job assignments. Often either these conflict with the objectives for pedestrian design, or the specific job descriptions put pedestrian planning, design, and engineering at a lower priority than other tasks.

The City should clearly identify the organizational responsibility for pedestrian facility planning, design, engineering, and implementation. This should include responsibility for reviewing and developing pedestrian policies and standards for public and private developments, addressing pedestrian improvements needs, developing and updating the Pedestrian Activities Center Plan map, applying for state and federal grants, and prioritizing pedestrian improvements.

Strategies: Pedestrian Facilities Coordination

- Identify the City agency (or agencies) responsible for coordinating pedestrian and bicycle planning activities and for overseeing all pedestrian and bicycle activities within the City.

PEDESTRIAN EDUCATION AND ENFORCEMENT

The Pedestrian Plan should also contain an ongoing educational element regarding air quality, vehicular laws, the health benefits of pedestrian activities, and the potential contribution of pedestrian activities to the reduction of congestion. This should be part of an overall city communication and education program. In addition, enforcement of the vehicle code for both the pedestrian and automobile driver is necessary to promote a safe environment.

Strategies: Develop a Pedestrian Education Program and Enforce Traffic Laws

- Develop a pedestrian education program as part of the City's overall communication and education program.
- Provide police resources and manpower to enforce pedestrian and vehicular traffic laws.